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ABSTRACT

Assistance for school districts, accreditation teams, and education service centers in the development and use of local curriculum documents is provided in this publication. District responsibility to develop local curriculum guides has led to a lack of standardization, which in turn has complicated assessment. State requirements and standards for curriculum documents are clarified in this document. Part 1 offers an instrument for assessing curriculum guides based on state principles and standards for accreditation. Four descriptors and their indicators are presented. Part 2 contains answers to questions most often asked by school personnel, some of which involve the curriculum guide development and assessment processes, contents, and uses and purposes of curriculum guides. Appendices contain planning and administration principles set forth by the Texas administrative code and statutes and a compliance statement with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. (LMI)

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CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS:

GUIDES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM QUALITY

EA 023 211

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TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
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FOREWORD

The purpose of this publication is to provide assistance for school districts, accreditation teams, and education service centers in the development/adaptation/revision and use of local curriculum documents. Such documents help ensure the best instructional programs for students. Curriculum documents are examined by accreditation teams and are assessed for their level of quality.

In a letter sent to every district in December 1984, I stated: "Apparently some districts have been asking teachers to include an excessive amount of detail in their lesson plans hoping to use the year's compilation of lesson plans as curriculum guides for next year. That simply is not the way to develop curriculum guides. Lesson plans should be developed from curriculum guides and not vice versa."

Subsequently, in a letter dated June 1986, I added: "The key to having adequate documentation without excessive paperwork is a set of comprehensive curriculum documents which cover the essential elements plus other local topics considered important to the district. Preferably, these should be developed by those who will be using them, but teachers should not have to develop such material on their own time without some compensation."

This publication should provide clarification concerning the development/adaptation/revision of curriculum guides as well as information concerning other desirable components of quality curriculum documents.

We recognize and appreciate the assistance of a number of individuals in the development of this publication. Personnel in the Agency's Division of Accreditation, education service center directors and curriculum staff, and district administrators and staff members reviewed and responded to preliminary drafts.

We hope this publication will assist in efforts to continue to improve instruction in Texas schools.

W.N. Kirby
Commissioner of Education

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Introduction

Implementation of the state basic curriculum, which began in the 1984-85 school year, has caused significant changes in programs of instruction in Texas schools. For the first time, essential elements of instruction for subjects and courses were required to be taught by all school districts. The essential elements are specified in Title 19, Chapter 75, of the Texas Administrative Code. Since the initial implementation of the Chapter 75 curriculum in the fall of 1984, the State Board of Education has continued to support quality curriculum and instructional development through its long-range planning process and by decisions made during regular meetings.

In an effort to provide flexibility for local decision making in curricular matters, districts have the responsibility to develop, review, revise, and/or adapt local curriculum guides and other documents. The Texas Education Agency provides support to districts through state curriculum frameworks, workshops, conferences, and day-to-day verbal and written communication. Additional assistance is provided by education service centers, professional associations, colleges and universities, and commercial enterprises. Consequently, a wide variety of curriculum documents are being developed in many school districts.

Because of a lack of standardization among curriculum documents, assessment of their quality has been difficult at the state, regional, and district levels. Judgments have been based on benchmarks outlined in documents such as the December 1984 letter from Commissioner W.N. Kirby to superintendents in which Dr. Kirby described both minimum and comprehensive curriculum guides and the Texas Education Agency publication, *Documenting Mastery: An Inservice Presentation*. To further clarify the issue of what constitutes quality curriculum documents, the Division of General Education, the Division of Accreditation, education service centers, and numerous school districts have worked cooperatively to produce this publication which outlines standards of quality.

This publication is designed to communicate requirements for curriculum documents. In addition, it reflects standards for quality in programs of instruction. Part I is based on Principles and Standards for Accreditation, Texas Administrative Code. Part II contains questions and answers that school personnel often ask. Furthermore, the publication suggests how curriculum guides are developed, reviewed, revised, and/or adapted; clarifies what they should include; explains how they should be used; and indicates how programs of instruction are assessed by members of an accreditation team.

The descriptors related to curriculum documents that are contained in this publication are not new. Curriculum guides have long been required; however, descriptors and guidelines for them have not always been consistent nor available. Because wide flexibility exists for curriculum documents and because a series of documents (guides, textbooks, scope and sequence charts, lesson plans, etc.) combine to comprise the whole, it is not easy to describe specific standards for only one part.

Explanation of Terms Used In This Publication

Assessment

Evaluation of student performance on objectives/tasks/knowledge. Performance assessment may include short- and/or long-term evaluation.

Curriculum documents

Materials that may be maintained in a variety of media (bound volumes, loose leaf notebooks, computer discs, etc.) for use in planning, teaching, and assessing specific subjects/courses. Materials should include:

- curriculum guides—a major component of the district's documents on which instruction for subjects/courses is based
- lesson plans—teachers' instructional outlines that are consistent with district and campus policies. (See letter dated December 1984 from W.N. Kirby.)
- scope and sequence charts—charts of essential elements or objectives placed in a sequenced manner that reflects a hierarchy of skill and concept development

Documentation for instruction

Evidence in a variety of formats of what has been taught and of student performance that can be used for decisions relating to mastery, promotion, and retention.

Grade records are one source of evidence along with curriculum guides, lesson plans, etc., of what has been taught and of student performance used for decisions regarding mastery, promotion, and retention.

Descriptor

A statement by which the Division of Accreditation of the Texas Education Agency and the local district assess the extent to which curriculum documents satisfy state requirements and reflect quality.

Instruction of essential elements

The components of curriculum content that Chapter 75 requires school districts to teach in every subject (at all grade levels) and in each course of the state curriculum.

Goals

Broad general statements of aim and direction.

Mission

A statement expressing the specific purpose and function of the district and campus that provides a focus for instruction.

Objectives

Specific statements of aim and direction that identify expected instructional outcomes; subgoals.

Philosophy

Broad general principles of education.

PART I

Instrument for Assessing District's Curriculum Documents

Part I of this publication is designed to provide assistance to local districts and education service centers and will be used by the Division of Accreditation, Texas Education Agency, for determining the quality and/or sufficiency of curriculum documents. The Principles and Standards for Accreditation (see Appendix) address district support and commitment, curriculum materials, and instructional programs. Principle IV addresses the commitment and support of the district. Curriculum documents for all subjects, courses, and grade levels* developed/adapted/revised locally and used effectively for instruction for all students including those in special education and special populations are addressed in Principles V and VI. The descriptors and charts in Part I are provided for use in assessment of local curriculum documents.

The district's curriculum documents for all subjects, courses, and grade levels* are locally developed/adapted and used effectively for instruction for all students including those in special education and special populations [Title 19, Section 97.25, TAC (See Appendix)]. Principals, teachers, and staff participate in the ongoing development of curriculum documents.

*Curriculum documents for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies should be developed/revised first. However, a balanced curriculum requires attention to all areas. Elementary school guides may be organized by grade levels or subject areas. In the secondary grades, districts may develop several course guides for each subject area.

Descriptor 1

The board of trustees and administrators demonstrate commitment to curriculum development if provisions such as released time, money, and/or specialists allow teachers to be directly involved with the development, revision, and/or review of curriculum documents.

Subject Areas	Substantial Commitment	Adequate	Minimal
Prekindergarten			
English language arts			
Other languages			
Mathematics			
Science			
Health			
Physical education			
Art			
Music			
Theatre arts			
Social studies			
Economics			
Business education			
Vocational education			
Computer literacy			

Descriptor 2

Curriculum documents are developed and reviewed by teachers and administrators and are revised according to:

Indicator	information frequently considered	information occasionally considered	information seldom considered
student performance information derived from teacher observation, test data, cumulative data, etc.			
information derived from the district's planning processes			
new district and state mandates			

Descriptor 3

The curriculum documents are designed for practical and effective use by teachers.

Curriculum Guides

- District-produced and/or adapted curriculum guides meet requirements if they:

Indicator	in all subject areas and grade levels	in most subject areas and grade levels	in few subject areas and grade levels
provide learning objectives keyed to essential elements*			
provide a suggested sequence for objectives, prekindergarten-Grade 12. (This may or may not parallel the suggested sequence in the textbook.) See Questions 13-14, Part II.)			
provide lists of sample instructional resources such as textbooks, materials, equipment, and personnel			

- District-produced and/or adapted curriculum guides reflect quality if, in addition to meeting requirements, they:

Indicator	in all subject areas and grade levels	in most subject areas and grade levels	in few subject areas and grade levels
include a statement of the district's overall instructional philosophy, focus, and goals, plus a statement of philosophy specific to each subject or course			
include examples of teaching activities, with suggestions for how or when to use for enrichment and remediation, and classroom management strategies for working with groups of students**			
provide examples of a variety of assessment strategies that can be correlated to the objectives			

*Districts may generate learning objectives based on local needs and interests. These additional objectives may or may not be tied to the required essential elements.

**May be provided in one or more of the following ways: (a) specific references to supplementary materials, resource files, and written activities; (b) comprehensive, sequentially developed listing of teaching activities; and (c) sample activities.

Lesson Plans

Teacher-produced (either individually or by groups of teachers) daily lesson plans reflect quality if they:

Indicator	in all subject areas and grade levels	in most subject areas and grade levels	in few subject areas and grade levels
include strategies for teaching the objectives. (Plans may include topics to be covered, materials needed, activities involved, assessment and reteach strategies, and adaptations for special populations. If included in the curriculum guide, these may need only to be referenced in the lesson plans.)			

Grading Documents

Grading documents/records* are of quality if they:

Indicator	information complete	information incomplete	information unavailable
reflect individual student performance on objectives mastered and not mastered			
provide evidence of enrichment and remediation			
provide evidence for promotion/retention decisions			

*Grading documents/records may be in media other than printed form.

Descriptor 4

The district emphasizes the importance of curriculum documents via training and use.

Indicator	substantial	adequate	minimal
Teachers and staff are trained in the development, revision, or adaptation process of curriculum documents.			
Teachers and staff are trained in the use of curriculum documents.			
Curriculum guide use is evident.*			

*Corrective action is necessary if evidence indicates that district personnel are not using the curriculum guides.

PART II

Questions and Answers Concerning The Development/Revision and Use of Curriculum Guides

1

Why must districts develop curriculum guides?

Curriculum guides are a major component of a district's curriculum documents. Development/revision of curriculum guides ensures that a practical reference base exists at the local level for curriculum planning in all areas. While teachers typically know what they are to teach and how they will teach it, a documented road map of the whats and hows of instruction is highly important. The curriculum guide serves as reinforcement for current teachers of the subject or grade level as to the direction in which they are heading, as well as a basic descriptive tool for new teachers. It provides information for any other individuals interested in knowing about the instructional program for the course or grade level. The Texas Education Agency publication, *State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum,* presents the basic core of the instructional program; the local guide reflects local objectives and needs and ensures access to the curriculum by all students. The process of development/revision and the end products then meet the requirements outlined for curriculum and instruction in Principles and Standards for Accreditation (see Appendix).

The guides also provide a means of communicating the district's program to teachers, parents, school board members, and the community.

2

Isn't this really yet another step toward state standardization of curriculum?

While the essential elements dictate the minimum instructional opportunities that Texas districts must provide for all students, each district's curriculum guides should reflect consideration of local philosophy, goals, and objectives. In other words, the foundation has been provided by the state, but the architectural detail is the responsibility of the school district. The process represents the concept that a state/local partnership is crucial in successfully educating students. Districts still have a great deal of flexibility in curriculum development and delivery of instruction.

3

What should a curriculum guide include?

A guide should provide sufficient detail so that both new and experienced teachers are able to plan effective instruction with minimum additional paperwork.

Minimum components of a curriculum guide should be the following:

A. learning objectives keyed to essential elements

B. a suggested sequence for objectives, prekindergarten-Grade 12

C. lists of sample instructional resources such as textbooks, materials, equipment, and personnel

Components of a **quality** curriculum guide should include A, B, and C from above and:

D. a statement of the district's instructional philosophy, focus, and goals plus a statement of philosophy for each subject or course

E. examples of teaching activities including enrichment, remediation, and classroom management strategies. These may be specific references, complete listings, or sample activities.

F. a variety of formal and informal assessment strategies that can be correlated to an objective

4

Is everything we're currently using obsolete?

In most cases, much of what districts have developed locally for current or previous guides may continue to be appropriate; however, revisions will need to be made periodically to incorporate new textbooks, materials, resources, technology, etc. Again, the purpose of developing/revising guides is to provide an instructional road map with accurate directions to ensure that students and teachers alike will arrive at appropriate destinations.

5

What reference materials are needed?

Reference materials can be gathered from the Agency, ESC's, other school districts, and your own school system. These materials might include Agency publications such as *State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum,* AD8 370 12; Agency curriculum frameworks; and *Documenting Mastery: An Inservice Presentation,* CU7 370 02. Other appropriate reference materials would include computerized management systems, other curriculum materials, curriculum for special populations, assessment strategies, textbooks, and teacher-made and commercially prepared products.

6

What are some aspects of the process of developing/revising curriculum guides?

Quality development/revision projects begin with a clear understanding of the nature and extent of the process. The following issues are addressed prior to beginning work:

- **mission, philosophy, and goals**
  Is there a statement of the district's mission, philosophy, and goals available to guide the content development/revision? Further, is there a statement of philosophy for each subject and course?

6 *continued*

- **administrative support and timelines**
  Is the development/revision project part of the district's plan for improvement? Has a needs assessment been conducted as a part of the plan? Can teachers be provided with released time for committee work? Will clerical services be provided for the committee? How long does the committee have to develop/revise the guide? When does the district expect to implement it?

- **budget**
  How much money is allocated? Who determines the plan for using this budget? What timeframe does the budget encompass? How much can be spent for teacher stipends, materials, and consultants? Must printing costs come from this allocation?

  Costs will vary depending upon the amount of development, adaptation, or revision required. Costs may include:

  1) stipends for committee members
  2) salaries for secretarial services
  3) costs of supplies
  4) printing and binding costs or costs for copies in other media
  5) substitute teacher pay

  Because curriculum guide development/revision is an ongoing process, districts should allocate some money in this area each fiscal year.

7

How will we know if a district's curriculum guide meets the needs of the district, schools, and students?

Short-term answers may be sought in responses from teachers about the material and its usefulness; however, the real answer to this question will be evident over a period of years. A needs assessment, completed before the guide-writing project, will yield objective and subjective information useful to the committee. Objective information might include standardized test scores, statewide assessment data, student grades, at-risk student data, and other information. Subjective information might include the educational opinions of teachers, parents, and students.

8

Why can't the central office staff develop/adapt/revise the curriculum guides? Outside consultants? ESC's?

Teachers actually involved in delivering instruction have firsthand knowledge of what the needs of the students are. However, teachers, principals, and the district support staff share the responsibility for determining what the goals and objectives should be, for it is in this way that the district makes its own statement of what is to be taught and what is to be learned. Outside consultants and ESC's can be excellent resources for guiding the project and making certain that all components are present and adequately addressed; however, if teachers are really going to use the guides, they must have ownership in them.

9

Who may be assigned the role of the curriculum guide coordinator?

This person may be the superintendent, subject area coordinator, principal, assistant principal, department chair, lead teacher, or any other qualified individual. Optimally, this individual knows the content to be addressed in the guide and possesses leadership qualities and skill in human relations.

10

Who should be on the curriculum guide committee?

Teachers from each grade level, subject, or course; special program teachers; media specialists; and others who will be using the curriculum guides should be represented or act as advisors to the committee.

Even though the committee will not consist of outside personnel, nevertheless, several sources of assistance should be available to the committee. The Texas Education Agency, education service centers, supervisors and teachers both from within and without the district who are experienced in writing guides, university personnel, and others such as private consultants may provide valuable assistance.

Depending on the size of the district, the author of the guide for a subject, course, or grade level may be a single teacher in a small district or a committee in a large district. Whatever the size of the committee, the individuals responsible for writing must have genuine personal and professional commitment to and interest in the district's effort to develop curriculum guides. Volunteers are more likely to have such commitment, and individuals who have a history of working well with others are, of course, best suited for the task. Ideally, writers to include are teachers from each grade level or subject area and, except in the largest districts, representatives from each campus where teachers will use the guides.

11

What is the curriculum guide committee's task?

Based on the needs assessment, the committee's task is to focus on organizing the curriculum and writing guidelines to meet the district's needs within and beyond the state requirements. The district may be at a point to develop, adapt, or revise its guides.

12

For which subject areas should we develop/revise/adapt curriculum guides?

Districts should develop/revise/adapt curriculum guides for all grade levels and subject areas.

13

What is a general sequence of tasks for the process of developing/revising curriculum guides?

The following is a suggested general sequence for the procedure: (Districts may be in various stages of the process in different disciplines or grade levels.)

A. Preparation. For initial development of a guide, a needs assessment is advisable. However, for adaptation or revisions, a complete needs assessment may not be necessary. For adaptations or revisions necessitated by new textbooks, additional instructional materials, etc., an inventory/gathering of available resources may satisfy this initial step.

B. Orientation for committee members. The first committee meeting is generally an orientation and a work session. During the orientation, the project coordinator will explain the task, give an overview of the type of work the committee will do, and provide details as to where, when, and how the committee will work. The responsibilities and deadlines will be discussed. During the work session, the committee will analyze the needs assessment and discuss its implications for the project.

C. Guide development

D. Implementation

E. Review/Revision

14

To avoid reinventing the wheel, why can't we just use our textbooks and the accompanying teachers' editions or purchase a set of prepared objectives that are keyed to the essential elements from another school district, an ESC, or a commercial source?

A textbook is only a tool and only a single source of instructional information. Also, a textbook and the teacher's edition should not constitute the total curriculum. Every effective teacher goes beyond the content and resources of a single textbook and teacher's edition and so should a curriculum guide. If the textbook and teacher's edition do a thorough job of providing instructional information and support for a subject area or grade level, they should be used to help facilitate the development of curriculum guides.

Additional resources need to be used because:

- not all students are able to master the objectives as they are presented in the textbooks because of students' different learning styles
- textbooks and teachers' editions may cover some essential elements and objectives more thoroughly than others which requires supplementary materials to fill in the gaps

Commercially prepared packages are indeed available to help a district interested in determining and clarifying local objectives. As thorough as a commercial package may be, a school district is still obliged to adapt the package to the needs of the district by adjusting and reordering content, including philosophy, goals, and objectives.

15

Does the sequencing of objectives in a curriculum guide or scope and sequence chart require that all teachers cover the same objectives on the same day?

State regulations neither require nor prohibit such structured teaching.

16

From what sources do we get our local objectives?

Use any of the following in determining local objectives: your textbooks, current or previous curriculum guides, information from the district's testing program, the needs and goals of the community, the mission of the school district and/or individual campuses, input from individual teachers, a commercially prepared product, Agency curriculum materials.

17

What are some significant steps for introducing the guide for effective and continued use?

- Ideally, teachers should have the guide in their hands several weeks prior to an orientation meeting. This will allow them time to study the guide so they may avoid making instant reactions.
- Schedule the orientation meeting prior to actual use of the guide. The session may be led, either individually or as a panel, by teachers who worked on the guide. The agenda should address the guide's development and organization and instructions for use.
- Encourage feedback about the guide from all teachers. An ongoing procedure for gathering and processing feedback should be established. The process can include involvement of teachers by grade levels, departments, and/or campus clusters and should provide for the timely revision and improvement of guides.
- Contact persons knowledgeable about the philosophy and development of the guide may be designated on each campus and be responsible for assisting teachers with its use.
- Provide teachers with simple forms for submitting feedback information. The forms should be brief and contain open-ended questions eliciting suggestions for improvement. The use of scales and yes/no questions is discouraged.

18

How can we ensure that the curriculum guides or other district instructional materials are used and the curriculum is being taught?

Administrators' formal and informal classroom observations of teachers may provide information about the use of a curriculum document. In addition, lesson plan books and grade books should indicate if the guides are in use and the curriculum is being presented.

19

How often should a guide be reviewed and revised?

Curriculum guide revision is an ongoing process. Once the initial guide is completed, designated staff, i.e., teachers, principals, supervisors, and others, should meet regularly to review it. They should add, delete, and alter objectives, activities, evaluation strategies, sequence, and resources in light of the previous year's instructional experiences. New state requirements, new textbooks, and district policies may indicate the need for revision of guides. This step need not be a time-consuming activity and may be done individually by teachers as they teach. However, regularly scheduled revisions should be planned so that the guide may continue to be useful and effective.

20

How can a curriculum guide be of maximum benefit to teachers and students?

A guide provides the starting point and indicates direction for coordination of planning and instruction. For example, you will be able to see what is being taught above and below your level; you will be able to avoid overemphasizing one area and neglecting another. You can avoid meaningless repetition from one grade to the next and focus on what students need. The guide will be particularly useful for the new teacher, because it will provide an overview of the entire curriculum, including its philosophy and goals.

21

How will the guide affect the amount of paperwork I will have (documentation of mastery in lesson plans, grade book, etc.)?

The curriculum guide writing committee, with input from appropriate administrators and staff, should design a documentation plan addressing the required content of lesson plans and management of gradebooks. Such information should be clear, concise, and easy to use. For example, where the curriculum guide contains sufficient detail, a lesson plan may need only to reference the essential element/objective addressed, appropriate textbook pages, resources to be used, and contact person (where applicable), so that a substitute teacher or other interested observer might follow the instructional plan/sequence.

The State Board of Education, the Commissioner, and the Texas Education Agency highly recommend that districts include detailed information in curriculum guides or other sources so that paperwork is minimized for the development of lesson plans. In this way, lesson plans may include only references to other documents.

22

Why is it that in two school districts having identical curriculum guides one is given a corrective action and the other is not cited by accreditation teams?

In most instances where this has occurred, the corrective action focused not on the content or design of the curriculum documents but on the lack of accessibility to teachers or the lack of the use of the documents as a basis for classroom instruction. The district that is cited may simply have curriculum guides on the shelf. Teachers in this district may not be aware of the guides or their usefulness. The best curriculum guides will serve no purpose if teachers do not use them as instructional resources.

23

For accreditation visits, is it enough only to "meet requirements" when developing curriculum guides?

Not necessarily. Since quality became the major focus of accreditation with the implementation of the state curriculum, districts may sometimes be assessed corrective and/or improvement actions for lack of quality in curriculum guides even though the minimum requirements are evident. A district should develop curriculum guides to help provide the best possible instructional program for students, not just for accreditation team scrutiny and judgment. In December 1984, Commissioner Kirby, in a letter to all districts, stated: "Curriculum guides should contain, as a minimum, for each secondary course and elementary grade level subject, a set of measurable student objectives to support district instructional goals, and a correlation of student objectives to the essential elements as outlined in Chapter 75. Objectives should extend beyond the essential elements, as needed, in order to define a complete instructional program. A broad range of thinking skills must be reflected in the objectives (knowledge, application, analysis, etc.).

"A more comprehensive curriculum guide should extend beyond a definition of content. It should include a correlation of instructional materials to student objectives, suggested instructional activities, recommended units of study, and descriptions of assessment techniques. Districts should continually be refining guides for the purpose of providing information to assist the classroom teacher in designing instruction, to inform parents, and to provide guidelines for supervisors and administrators."

APPENDIX

Planning and Accreditation

Title 19, Part II
Texas Administrative Code and
Statutory Citations
Chapter 97, Subchapter B

Update No.: Original

Subchapter B. Principles and Standards for Accreditation

§97.21 **Principle I.**

Principle. Community conditions permit and encourage the district to maintain an educational program of high quality.

(1) Standard 1. School district personnel, the board of trustees, and the community work harmoniously toward promoting and producing positive student learning outcomes.

(2) Standard 2. The administration and board of trustees maintain communication with citizens and parents concerning school operations and student achievement.

(A) Indicator A. Citizens are systematically kept informed of school-related events and issues, at district, campus, and classroom levels.

(B) Indicator B. Citizens are systematically allowed and encouraged to use appropriate channels and forums to make their views known.

(C) Indicator C. The rights of parents and the importance of parental involvement in the educational process are recognized by the administration and board of trustees in their policies and their actions.

(3) Standard 3. The district's tax rate is adequate to finance required programs and operations.

(A) Indicator A. Funding is adequate to allow the instructional program to be in compliance with accreditation requirements.

(B) Indicator B. The conditions of the physical facilities reflect sufficient financial support by the district's citizens.

§97.22 **Principle II.**

Principle. The district operates in compliance with constitutional and statutory law, rules of the State Board of Education, and other applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

(1) Standard 1. The superintendent of schools keeps the board of trustees informed of applicable laws, rules, and regulations that affect school operations.

(2) Standard 2. The board of trustees obtains reliable interpretations of applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and acts in accordance with those interpretations.

§97.23 **Principle III.**

Principle. District governance produces educational effectiveness, systematic accountability, and fiscal responsibility.

(1) Standard 1. The board of trustees functions as the district's policy-making and appraisal body.

(A) Indicator A. The board develops, adopts, and follows legal policies and budgets that support an effective educational program.

(B) Indicator B. The board appraises district programs for their effectiveness in bringing about student learning.

(C) Indicator C. The board recognizes and respects the superintendent's rights and responsibilities as the chief administrative officer of the district. The board ensures that the superintendent has sufficient authority to function effectively in that role, makes its expectations clear in the superintendent's written job description, and regularly evaluates the superintendent's performance in terms of those expectations.

(D) Indicator D. The individual members of the board participate in mandated training programs designed to increase their knowledge and effectiveness.

(2) Standard 2. The superintendent of schools functions as the chief administrative officer of the district.

(A) Indicator A. The superintendent adheres to all legal policies and budgets adopted by the board.

(B) Indicator B. The superintendent recognizes and respects the board's rights and responsibilities as the district's policy-making and appraisal body.

(C) Indicator C. The superintendent ensures that each principal functions as the campus instructional leader.

(D) Indicator D. The superintendent participates in activities and training programs designed to increase administrative knowledge and effectiveness.

(3) Standard 3. The board of trustees holds regularly scheduled meetings, and keeps official minutes of the meetings.

(A) Indicator A. Both open and closed meetings of the board comply with legal requirements.

(B) Indicator B. The minutes record all of the board's official actions, comply with state law, and are available to the public.

(4) Standard 4. The district's policies are in writing and have been officially adopted by the board. They are given appropriate distribution, and are accessible to school staff members, citizens, and all interested individuals.

(A) Indicator A. Policies are comprehensive. Especially important are those related to:

(i) students—attendance, responsibilities, transfers, curriculum offerings and graduation requirements, promotion and retention, remediation and placement, participation in extracurricular activities, rights, conditions leading to suspension or other disciplinary sanctions, and procedural safeguards required by law;

(ii) school operations—paperwork reduction efforts and the district's efforts to improve attendance;

(iii) employees—responsibilities, job descriptions, rights under employment status, appraisal and evaluation, retention and dismissal, contracts and assignments, and procedural safeguards required by law; and

(iv) health and safety—policies dealing with student health required by law, accident and fire prevention, procedures in case of accidents and disasters, and safety precautions.

(B) Indicator B. Each policy bears the date of its adoption or most recent amendment.

(C) Indicator C. Policies are updated at least annually, and completely reviewed every three years.

§97.24 **Principle IV.**

Principle. The district is continuously improving the effectiveness of its programs and services.

(1) Standard 1. The board of trustees and the district staff are accountable for the effectiveness of the district's programs and services.

(A) Indicator A. The district uses the annual performance report and other evaluation information to identify and report to the public both the programs and services that need improvement and those with high quality which should be maintained.

(B) Indicator B. The evaluation of district performance includes, but is not limited to:

(i) the quality of learning on each campus;

(ii) effectiveness of special education and programs for special populations;

(iii) correlation between student grades and performance on standardized tests;

(iv) effectiveness of strategies to improve student attendance in a district or on a campus where student attendance constitutes a problem; and

(v) the quality of teacher, administrator, and board member training programs.

(2) Standard 2. The district uses effective strategies for improvement of its programs and services.

(A) Indicator A. School district goals, objectives, and strategies for improvement are specific and are based upon the findings of the annual performance report and on other evaluations of programs and services.

(B) Indicator B. Goals, objectives, and strategies for improvement are formulated with participation by teachers, principals, and others who have responsibility for their implementation. They are communicated to all district staff members, to the students and their parents, and to the residents of the district.

(C) Indicator C. The district uses a planning process that helps it to carry out identified strategies for improving the quality and effectiveness of district and campus programs and services.

§97.25 **Principle V.**

Principle. The district's instructional program complies with all statutory requirements and rules of the State Board of Education.

(1) Standard 1. The district is in compliance with Chapter 75 of this title (relating to Curriculum).

(2) Standard 2. Local curriculum documents and materials are developed and used solely for their effectiveness in the teaching/learning process.

(3) Standard 3. The district's curriculum is adapted appropriately to meet the needs of all students, including those in special education and special populations.

§97.26 **Principle VI.**

Principle. The district's instructional program is delivered to students effectively and efficiently.

(1) Standard 1. Instructional arrangements support effective teaching and learning.

(A) Indicator A. Class sizes are in compliance with statutes and State Board of Education rules where they apply. In all cases, class sizes are appropriate for effective teaching and learning.

(B) Indicator B. Principals and teachers know and use a variety of proven instructional techniques as well as innovative approaches that have reasonable expectations of success.

(C) Indicator C. Principals and teachers possess and exhibit skills in effective applicatio of classroom and discipline management strategies.

(D) Indicator D. Classroom practices known to be counterproductive are eliminated as a r of the classroom observation and teacher appraisal process.

(2) Standard 2. Students are encouraged to take as wide a range of subjects and courses as the curriculum rules and local conditions permit. Proven alternative delivery systems for instruction are used as needed.

§97.27 **Principle VII.**

Principle. The district provides student services to augment and support its instructional program.

(1) Standard 1. There is a realistic developmental program of guidance services at all grade levels.

(A) Indicator A. The guidance program, through counseling, consultation, and coordination, gives assistance to teachers, administrators, students in groups, and individual students.

(B) Indicator B. The guidance program addresses the educational, vocational, personal, and social needs of all students at all grade levels.

(C) Indicator C. The guidance program encourages all students to realize and reach their maximum potentials.

(D) Indicator D. The guidance program serves all students, including those in special education and special populations.

(2) Standard 2. Adequate student health services are provided. The district is in compliance with §85.41 of this title (relating to Health Services Program) and all statutory requirements.

(3) Standard 3. Measures promoting student safety are prescribed in policy and carried out in practice.

(A) Indicator A. Students are drilled in procedures to be followed in case of fires, tornadoes, and other emergencies.

(B) Indicator B. Required safety equipment is present, and standard precautions are observed throughout the district, with special attention given to laboratories and shops.

(C) Indicator C. Students are taught the proper use of potentially dangerous materials and equipment before using them.

§97.28 **Principle VIII.**

Principle. The district's instructional resources are an integral part of the instructional program.

(1) Standard 1. The district systematically acquires, maintains, and replaces instructional materials that are appropriate for its instructional program.

(A) Indicator A. In making its textbook adoptions, the district considers:

(i) consistency in scope and sequence; and

(ii) suitability for the district's instructional program.

(B) Indicator B. The district provides sufficient resources in addition to textbooks as needed for effective teaching and learning.

(C) Indicator C. There is a specific procedure for obtaining and replacing instructional materials. The procedure involves participation by teachers who will be using the materials.

(2) Standard 2. The district operates a planned program for library media services and materials in compliance with Chapter 81, Subchapter F of this title (relating to Library Media Standards).

(3) Standard 3. The district provides specialized equipment, supplies, and environments for subjects and courses requiring them.

§97.29 **Principle IX.**

Principle. The district employs qualified and competent personnel, assigns them properly, and encourages their professional growth.

(1) Standard 1. Teachers have valid Texas teacher certificates, or meet other appropriate legal requirements, and have proper preparation for their assignments.

(A) Indicator A. Personnel records are properly maintained and contain all items required by rules of the State Board of Education.

(B) Indicator B. When necessary conditions require that teachers be assigned outside their fields of preparation, appropriate documentation is placed in the personnel files at the time of the assignments.

(2) Standard 2. The district operates a staff development program that brings about educational improvement and meets legal requirements.

(A) Indicator A. Findings of the district's annual performance report are used in planning staff development.

(B) Indicator B. Findings of the teacher appraisals are used in planning staff development.

(C) Indicator C. Staff development planning includes coordination with special education and programs for other special populations.

(D) Indicator D. Staff development is planned to address long-range needs as well as immediate concerns.

(E) Indicator E. The quality and relevancy of staff development programs are systematically evaluated.

(F) Indicator F. Staff development complies with all applicable laws and rules of the State Board of Education.

§97.30 **Principle X.**

Principle. The district's physical facilities are safe, well designed for instruction, and conducive to learning.

(1) Standard 1. Each facility is designed for its function.

(2) Standard 2. Provisions are made to accommodate the needs of handicapped persons.

(3) Standard 3. Each facility receives proper maintenance.

(A) Indicator A. Daily custodial services are provided.

(B) Indicator B. Immediate and long-range maintenance and repair are performed systematically.

(4) Standard 4. Each facility is free from safety and health hazards.

(5) Standard 5. Each facility constitutes a positive environment for teaching and learning.

(6) Standard 6. New facilities are provided when they are needed.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;

(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and

(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; TITLE IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
Austin, Texas
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